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For Immediate Release
June 22, 2005

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Sen. Allen's resolutions urging U.S. Coast Guard to retain Charlevoix cutter ship adopted by Senate

LANSING – The Senate approved two resolutions Wednesday, Senate Resolution 40 and Senate Concurrent Resolution 24, introduced by state Sen. Jason Allen, R-Traverse City, urging the U.S. Coast Guard to continue to operate a cutter ship out of Charlevoix.

Currently, the Coast Guard operates three similar class ships on the Great Lakes out of Port Huron and Charlevoix, and Duluth, Minnesota. Plans have been announced to scale back the number of these ships servicing the Great Lakes to two when Charlevoix's Acacia is decommissioned in 2006.

"I'm glad to do everything in my power to help keep a United States Coast Guard cutter ship operating out of Charlevoix," Allen said. "The Acacia provides essential navigational, as well as search and rescue services. Keeping a cutter operational out of Charlevoix is imperative to the economic well-being and public safety of northern Michigan residents and visitors."

Built in 1944, the Acacia performs patrols, tends over 200 navigation aids and keeps channels open in winter by breaking ice. The Acacia has also assisted in several emergency situations, including rescue missions to aid Beaver Island residents during inclement weather.

"It's hard to imagine how Lake Michigan could be serviced without a vessel stationed in the northwest portion of the Lower Peninsula," Allen said. "Our Great Lakes cover such a large territory to be served by just two ships. I sincerely hope our Congressional delegation will support the efforts of the Legislature and encourage the Coast Guard to reconsider their plans and keep a vessel in Charlevoix."

SR 40 will be enrolled and transmitted, while SCR 24 will be sent to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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Editor's note: A photo of Sen. Jason Allen addressing the Michigan State Senate in support of both resolutions is available on the Senate Majority Photowire:

<http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/Allen/Allen.htm>